THE GIANT

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NI | NATIVE INSTRUMENTS

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1   Welcome to THE GIANT

Thank you for purchasing THE GIANT, a virtual instrument that replicates a huge 12ft upright grand piano, the **Klavins Piano Model 370**.

The Klavins Model 370 is an unique instrument with a one-of-a-kind sound: its sound board has twice the size of a concert grand of 2.75m, it weighs 2 metric tons, the longest string has a sounding length of just over 3m; the action is specially made for this instrument by the famous piano action manufacturer Renner in Stuttgart, Germany.

THE GIANT's sound features a huge, but tight bass, a dynamic tonal range from very smooth and intimate to a crisp, almost Harpsichord like attack, an extraordinary tonal character, uniting the character of an upright piano with the body of a huge grand piano. This unique sound makes THE GIANT an ideal instrument in all kinds of expressive music.

Besides the real instrument, THE GIANT features a second KONTAKT instrument (*.nki file), delivering very special piano sounds followed by a unique convolution effect. The source sounds of this Cinematic instrument include:

- Overtones
- Resonances
- Plucked piano sounds
- Playable release sounds
- And special effects like piano hits, kicks, sweeps or scratches.

With over 150 special effect impulse responses included in the convolution module, the effect sounds can be morphed into something very different…

1.1   Facts and Features

KLAVINS MODEL 370

- Height: 3.7m
- Maximum string length: over 3 meters.

- Soundboard size: over 4 square meters - double the active vibrating surface compared to a 9ft grand.

- Sound dynamics enhanced by at least 30%.

- Power and clarity at all registers are significantly enhanced.

- Cast iron steel rim with a weight of almost 2 tons

- Integral part of a wall, reducing distortion and warping

THE GIANT

- Two Instruments: **THE GIANT** and **THE GIANT Cinematic Effects**

- 13 velocity zones for an extraordinary dynamic range

- 5 release samples for each key, with a length of up to 20 seconds

- Special resonance samples

- Halfpedal and Repedal

- Color control for easy variation of the timbre

- Real overtone samples

- Controllable piano noises like pedal, damper, string or hammer noises

- Compressor for pop piano sounds

- Global Preset system

- Based on the Galaxy Pianos engine

- 8GB sample content (4GB compressed)

Cinematic Effects

- Special cinematic sounds:

    ◦ overtones

    ◦ playable resonance

    ◦ playable release samples

    ◦ plucked piano sounds

◦ and special effects

▪ FX convolution engine with over 150 special effect impulse responses for completely new piano sounds

2   User Interface

2.1   Common Controls

This section looks at the controls that are common between both THE GIANT instrument and the Cinematic instrument.

2.1.1   Presets

The preset controls as they first appear.

Both instruments contain a preset system for selecting different settings. This can be found to the top right of either instrument. Use this section to save your own presets for use between different projects, or for keeping track of your changes.

> 💡 Presets will save the settings of all of the controls available on the instrument.

Loading a Preset

The main menu, labeled *Choose…*, contains a list of presets saved with the instrument.

► To load a preset, either select its entry from the main menu, or browse through the presets one at a time by using the left and right arrows located to the top right of the PRESET area.

> 💡 Selecting a preset will automatically load it.

Saving a Preset

1. Before you can save a preset you have created, you need to name the preset by selecting the text in the drop-down menu and typing a new name.
2. To save the preset, click on the first button on the upper row of preset controls, the one with the floppy-disc icon.

►   If you want to overwrite a preset, hold the Shift key as you click on the floppy-disc icon.

> ⚠ You cannot overwrite the factory presets that are included with the instruments.

Deleting a Preset

►   To delete a preset, select the preset you wish to remove, and then click on the second button on the upper row of preset controls, identified with the circle with a line through it.

> ⚠ You cannot delete the factory presets that are included with the instruments.

2.1.2   Space

The SPACE section refers to THE GIANT's Convolution Reverb, which uses impulse responses of real acoustic spaces to simulate the acoustics of those rooms. These IR's are a bit like the room's acoustic fingerprint, or like recording a sample of a space. Convolution reverb is unbeatable in quality and realism when it comes to simulating real acoustic spaces like concert halls, churches or studio rooms.

Controls

The Space controls are always located to the right of the instrument's interface.
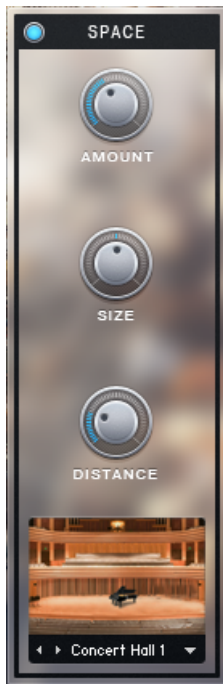
The SPACE controls.

► To switch the effect on or off, click the button to the top left of this section.

▪ AMOUNT: Controls the amount of signal sent to the reverb unit, and so also the volume of the reverb signal.

▪ SIZE: Increases or decreases the virtual size of the chosen room type.

▪ DISTANCE: Controls the amount of pre-delay before the reverb starts.

▪ The Impulse Response file is selected from the drop-down menu and arrows at the bottom of this section.

2.2   THE GIANT


THE GIANT's user Interface.

The follow sections will cover how to use the interface of the main GIANT instrument.

After loading THE GIANT you will see the instrument you are playing and the main controls:

2.2.1   Tone

The TONE section gives you control over the tonal character of THE GIANT. The TONE section has two main controls, as well as extra advanced controls on the Tone Edit Page, which is accessed by clicking on the arrow to the top right of the Tone window.

Tone Main Controls
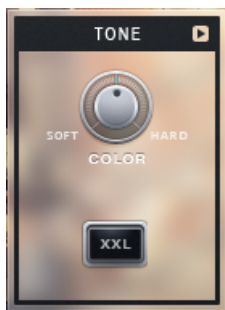
The main TONE controls.

The two main controls are:

▪ COLOR: Changes the tone color or timbre from soft to hard by readjusting the sample mapping. It's a dynamic way of mapping, while balancing the volume differences between softer and harder samples. Turning the COLOR knob to the right will make the instrument sound harder, crisper, and with more attack; turning it to the left will make the instrument sound warmer, softer and with less attack.

▪ XXL: The basic sound of THE GIANT is huge already, but with the XXL button it gets even bigger with more sustain, more space and more liveliness using Native Instruments' TRANSIENT MASTER effect. The XXL amount is controllable on the Tone Edit Page.

Tone Edit Page Controls

The TONE controls with the edit page open.

- **EQUALIZER**: Three controls for BASS, BODY and AIR, which control the levels of the low, middle and high frequency bands respectively.

- **XXL AMOUNT**: Adjusts the amount of extra size generated by the TRANSIENT MASTER.

- **LOW KEYS**: Changes the volume of the keys below middle C. The volume of the lower keys will be increased or decreased depending if the LEVEL knob is set towards MORE or LESS. The lower the key, the stronger the effect.

- **COMPRESSOR**: Here you can control the AMOUNT of compression, as well as select different compressor characters from the drop-down menu. A compressor, besides controlling the dynamic range, changes a sound's envelope and thus the sound itself. THE GIANT's compressor is more of a sound tool than a dynamic tool, which especially serves well in pop, rock and film-score music contexts.

2.2.2   Anatomy

Talking about THE GIANT's anatomy means talking about its design regarding playability and structure. Here you will find control over dynamics, tuning, noises, overtones and the stereo image.

Like the TONE Section, the ANATOMY section also has an Edit Page with extended controls. This Edit Page is also accessed from the small arrow button to the top right of the window.

Anatomy Main Controls

The ANATOMY controls.

- DYNAMIC RANGE: Compresses or expands the piano's dynamic range, while keeping the overall volume constant.

- RESONANCES: Pressing the sustain pedal on a piano raises all the dampers at once, enabling all strings to resonate sympathetically. This adds a much fuller and deeper sound to the note. The RESONANCES knob adjusts the volume of these string resonances, when the sustain pedal is down.

- The PEDAL indicator light shows when the sustain pedal is down and thus when the resonance samples are in use.

Anatomy Edit Page Controls

The ANATOMY controls with the edit page open.

- **OVERTONES**: Loads and enables overtone samples. After hitting a key, the corresponding strings may resonate at their fundamental or overtone frequencies when other strings are triggered. These overtones add liveliness to the sound. This is also known as Sympathetic String Resonance.

- The volume of the overtone samples can be set with the **LEVEL** knob.

- **WIDTH**: Widens or narrows the stereo field. The mid position corresponds to the stereo width of the original recording; turning the knob to the left position makes the sound mono, while turning it to the right artificially enhances the stereo width.

- SWAP: The samples in THE GIANT are panned with the low notes on the left and the high notes on the right, which corresponds to the listening position of the player. Using the SWAP button swaps the left and right channels, changing the listening position to that of the audience.

- KEYS: the dropdown menu gives you access to key velocity presets for customizing the velocity response to your keyboard and your way of playing.

- SILENT KEY: Enables the silent key function: very low key velocities result in no sound.

- REPEDALING: Enables repedaling — if the sustain pedal is depressed during note release, the remaining sound sustains

- HALFPEDAL: Enables the use of a continuous sustain pedal for half-pedaling. On a piano you can decide how far the dampers are lifted from the strings by controlling how far down you press the pedal. This affects the release time and the amount of resonance. When the HALFPEDAL button is unchecked, a continuous sustain pedal is transformed into an on/off switch. (For half-pedalling you need a special continuous sustain pedal, which outputs midi values from 1-127 instead of an on/off command.)

Release Samples

When hitting a key, the damper leaves the string. When releasing the key, the damper comes down to the string again. The energy generated by a loudly vibrating piano string, especially by the longer more powerful bass strings, can't be stopped by the small felt damper right away, so the sound gradually dies away, which can take some time, especially in the low strings. This is represented by the release samples.

- When REL. SAMPLE is switched on, this loads and uses the recorded release sounds of THE GIANT.

- The volume of the release samples can be set with the correspondent VOLUME fader.

- As the release samples of THE GIANT are very long (up to 20 seconds) they are switchable between Short and Long by using the DECAY switch. The Long setting will use the full original samples, whereas the Short setting will make the instrument more playable.

- If REL. SAMPLE is switched off, with the DECAY switch will change to a fader that controls the release time of amplitude envelope of the dry samples.

The DECAY slider, visible when REL. SAMPLE is turned off.

Noises

In this section you can load or unload four different mechanical noises that occur when playing a piano. The volume of each noise can be set using the corresponding fader.

- HAMMER: Loads and enables hammer noise samples. When releasing a key, the hammer returns to its resting position, creating mechanical hammer noise hat playz with the release samples.

- DAMPER: Loads and enables damper noise samples. The damper pedal raises all dampers from the strings at once when pressed and drops them back on the strings when released. Both result in a short damper noise. This feature is dynamically playable with a continuous sustain pedal.

- PEDAL: Loads and enables pedal noise samples. Because the pedals in a grand piano are such strong mechanisms, they transfer a lot of energy to the whole piano body and the soundboard, resulting in some low frequency resonance. When using a continuous sustain pedal, the volume of the pedal, damper and string noises depends on the speed in which the pedal is pressed.

- STRING: Loads and enables string noise samples. When the dampers leave the strings after pressing the damper pedal, each damper pulls its corresponding string a little bit, resulting in vibration of each string with its resonance frequency.

TUNING

The BASIC PITCH knob lets you select the basic pitch, also often called **Concert Pitch**, from 436Hz to 444 Hz.

The tuning (or temperment) of the piano can be adjusted by using the switch. It can be set to either Stretched or Equal. The default tuning is stretched, which is the way the piano was tuned for sampling. Stretched tuning accommodates the natural 'inharmonicity' of metal strings. This 'inharmonicity' stretches harmonics beyond their ideal frequencies. Solving this

dilemma involves some stretching of the higher notes upward and the lower notes downward from their ideal frequencies. The amount of stretching depends on the length of the string, and thus the size of the piano.

2.3   THE GIANT – Cinematic Effects

The Cinematic Effects KONTAKT Instrument is used to create extraordinary piano sounds by using different special sounds, articulations and noises a piano can make, processed through your choice of a collection of unique FX impulse responses.

2.3.1   Sources
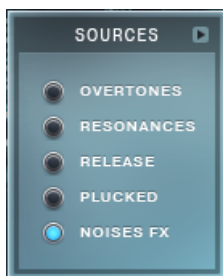
The SOURCES section.

This is where you select the different piano sounds you wish to activate and play. The sounds available to you are:

- OVERTONES: We recorded overtones for the whole piano, which usually are created by the interaction between two strings. In the cinematic instrument, these overtones can be played directly.

- RESONANCES: These are separate resonance samples of only the pedal down resonances for each key of the piano. This lets you play THE GIANT's resonance without the dry tones.

▪ RELEASE: The Release samples represent the decaying sound of the strings when a key is released, bringing the damper back to the string killing its sound. Usually these samples are triggered when releasing a key. Here they can be played when pressing a key, producing a very special sound character.

▪ PLUCKED: These are samples of THE GIANT's strings being plucked.

▪ NOISES FX features 88 different noises and special sounds created by treating THE GIANT in a rude way. We took out the whole mechanics and bumped it against the strings, we scratched and beat it, we used different metal tools on the strings, we hit the soundboard with a huge plastic hammer and a lot more to create extraordinary noises. These sounds can be great for creating big grooves.

The different sounds are loaded for playing by clicking on their corresponding button.

Sources Edit Page

The SOURCES section with the Edit Page open.

Further controls for each of the sources are available in the SOURCES Edit Page, which is made visible by clicking on the arrow button to the top right of the SOURCES section.

Here you have access to the volume level of each source, as well as a volume envelope per source, and high-pass and low-pass filters per source.

The FILTER and ENVELOPE controls for each source are accessed by clicking on the source name below the source's volume fader.

The controls available to you in this section are:

- ATTACK: Controls the attack time of the volume envelope. In other words, the fade-in time of the sound.

- DECAY: Controls the time it takes for the volume to fade from the maximum to the sustain level. This part of the envelope starts when the attack phase ends.

- SUSTAIN: Controls the sustain level the envelope will reach at the end of the decay phase.

- RELEASE: Controls the release time — the time it takes for the volume to fade out after a key is released.

- HIGH PASS: Controls the frequency below which sounds will be attenuated.

- LOW PASS: Controls the frequency above which sounds will be attenuated.

2.3.2   Convolution
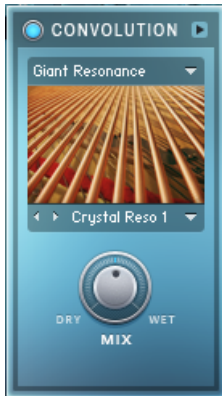
The main CONVOLUTION controls.

In this section you can control the special effect convolution and warp the sound sources into something unique.

From the drop-down menus you can select from over 150 effect impulse responses. The upper menu selects the category, and the lower menu and arrows select the individual sample. The categories available to you are:

- *Giant Resonance*: different resonance IRs created with the GIANT using a shotgun and other tools.

- *Piano Resonance*: different resonance IRs created with different pianos ranging from a simple upright to a high-end concert grand piano.

- *Processed Resonance*: different resonance samples tweaked and treated for special effects.

- *Piano Noises*: sounds like scratches or slides can work great as an impulse response for effect convolution.

- *Reverse*: different reversed piano sounds for creating reverse effects. All reverse IRs are by default synced to the host tempo enabling reverse effects in time. At the end of every name of the reverse IRs you will find the length in beats (for instance Rev Hit_2B takes 2 beats from hitting a key until its end).

- *Instrument*: different instrument samples enabling a kind of morph between THE GIANT and other instruments, like chimes, a koto, or even a tuning orchestra.

- *Texture*: these are IRs designed especially for changing the envelope of the source.

- *Weird Spaces*: weird rooms and ambiences.

- *Timed*: a couple of loops and timed echoes, enabling you to create tonal loops from THE GIANT's source sounds. These IRs are set to synchronize (SYNC) to your host software's tempo by default.

- *Tone Color*: these impulses will change the timbre of the instrument, like a complex EQ or filter.

The MIX knob adjusts the dry/wet ratio between the original source sound and the sound from the effect convolution module.

Convolution Edit Window

The CONVOLUTION controls with the edit page open.

► To open the CONVOLUTION Edit Window, click on the arrow button to the top right of the CONVOLUTION section. This window gives you access to additional effects and controls.

The additional effects available to you are:

- EQUALIZER: 4 band equalizer with BASS, AIR, and two MID bands with adjustable center frequencies.
- FILTER: HIGH PASS and LOW PASS filters
- LIMITER: Convolution can create significant resonances, depending on the interaction of the source sound and the convolution impulse response, so a limiter is provided to better control these volume peaks.

The additional IR controls are:

- SOURCE LEVEL: controls the overall source level of the combined source sounds

- SYNC: One category of the IRs, called **Timed**, contains loops and grooves. When selecting one of these presets, SYNC is automatically switched on, syncing those timed IRs to the host tempo.

- SIZE: Size of the convolution impulse responses.

3 Credits

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